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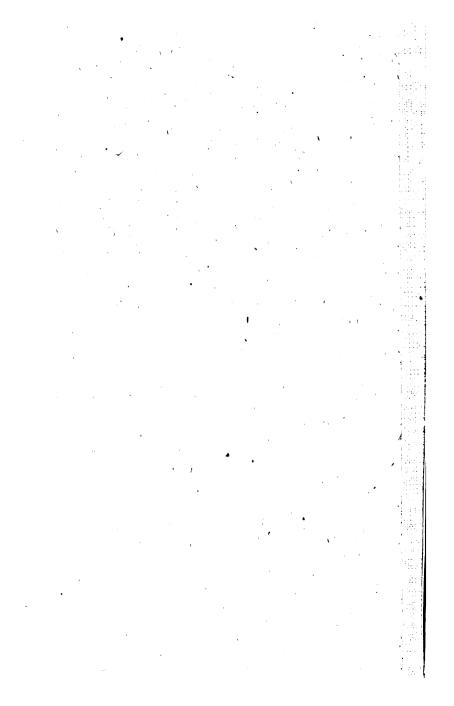
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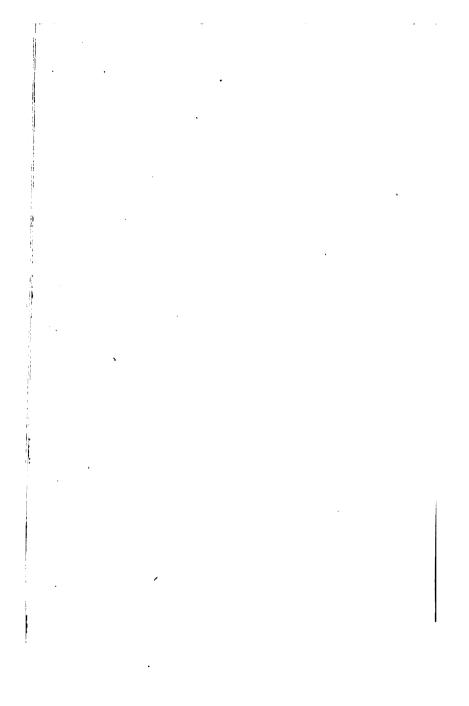
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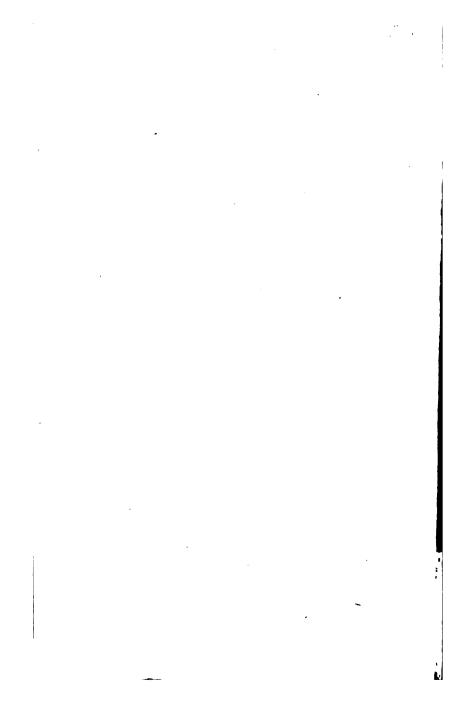


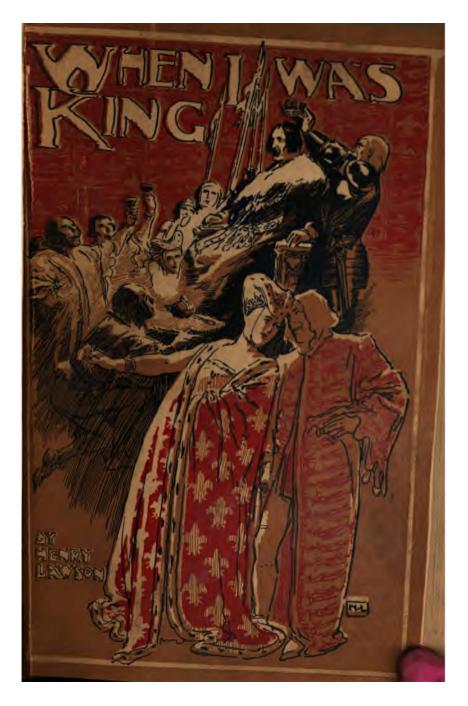


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I



THE SWACMAN, ON AUS UPPERS, PULLS AN UNDERTAKEN'S MUG, AND HE LEANS AGROSS THE COUNTER AND HE BREATHES IN CHARLE'S LUC-TALE OF THIRST AND MISFORTUNE. CHARLIE KNOWS IT, AND - AN. WELL' BUT IT'S VERY BAP FOR BUSINESS AT THE BULLETIM MOTEL

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AUTHOR OF "WHEN THE WORLD WAS WIDE, AND OTHER, VERSES;" "WERLE THE BILLY BOILS;" "JOB WILSON AND HIS MATES;" "ON THE TRACK AND OVER THE SLIPPAILS;" "VERSES, FOFULAE AND HUBOROUS;" AND "THE SLOPE SON"

# SYDNEY ANGUS AND ROBERTSON 80 CASTLEBEAGH STREET 1905

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#### THE CROSS-ROADS

Once more I write a line to you, While darker shadows fall; Dear friends of mine who have been true, And steadfast through it all. If I have written bitter rhymes, With many lines that halt, And if I have been false at times, It was not all my fault. To Heaven's decree I would not bow, And I sank very low— The bitter things are written now. And we must let them go. But I feel softened as I write; The better spirit springs,

And I am very sad to-night Because of many things.

XV

#### THE CROSS-ROADS

The friendships that I have abused, The trust I did betray, The talents that I have misused, The gifts I threw away. The things that did me little good, And—well my cheeks might burn— The kindly letters that I should Have answered by return.

But you might deem them answered now, And answered from my heart; And injured friends will understand 'Tis I who feel the smart. But I have done with barren strife And dark imaginings, And in my future work and life Will seek the better things.

THE second time I lived on earth Was several hundred years ago; And-royal by my second birth-I know as much as most men know. I was a king who held the reins As never modern monarchs can; I was a king, and I had brains, And, what was more, I was a man ! Called to the throne in stormy times, When things were at their very worst, I had to fight-and not with rhymes-My own self and my kindred first; And after that my friends and foes, And great abuses born of greed; And when I'd fairly conquered those, I ruled the land a king indeed.

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I found a deal of rottenness. Such as in modern towns we find ; I camped my poor in palaces And tents upon the plain behind. I marked the hovels, dens and drums In that fair city by the sea. And burnt the miles of wretched slums And built the homes as they should be. I stripped the baubles from the State, And on the land I spent the spoil ; I hunted off the sullen great, And to the farmers gave the soil. My people were their own police; My courts were free to everyone. My priests were to preach love and peace ; My Judges to see justice done. I'd studied men and studied kings, No crawling cant would I allow; I hated mean and paltry things, As I can hate them even now. A land of men I meant to see, A strong and clean and noble race---No subject dared kneel down to me, But looked his king straight in the face.

Had I not been a king in fact, A king in council-hall and tent. I might have let them crawl and act The courtier to their heart's content ; But when I called on other kings. And saw men kneel, I felt inclined To gently tip the abject things And kick them very hard behind. My subjects were not slaves, I guess, But though the women in one thing-A question 'twas of healthy dress-Would dare to argue with their king (I had to give in there, I own, Though none denied that I was strong), Yet they would hear my telephone If anything went very wrong. I also had some poets bright-Their songs were grand, I will allow-They were, if I remember right, About as had as bards are now. I had to give them best at last, And let them booze and let them sing ; As it is now, so in the past, They'd small respect for gods or king.

I loved to wander through the streets-I carried neither sword nor dirk-And watch the building of my fleets, And watch my artisans at work. At times I would take off my coat And show them how to do a thing-Till someone, clucking in his throat, Would stare and gasp, 'It is the king !' And I would say, 'Shut up, you fools ! Is it for this my towns I burn? You don't know how to handle tools. And by my faith you'll have to learn !' I was a king, but what of that? A king may warble in the spring And carry eggs home in his hat. Provided that he is a king. I loved to stroll about the town With chums at night, and talk of things, And, though I chanced to wear the crown, My friends, by intellect, were kings. When I was doubtful, then I might Discuss a matter quietly, But when I felt that I was right

No power on earth could alter me !

And now and then it was no sin Nor folly to relax a bit-I'd take my friends into an inn And call for wine and pay for it. And then of many things we'd clack With loosened tongues and visions clear-I often heard behind my back The whispered 'Peace, the king is here !' The women harped about a queen, I knew they longed to have a court And flaunt their feathers on the scene. But hitherto I'd held the fort. My subjects wanted me, no doubt, To give the throne a son and heir-(There were some little kings about, But that was neither here nor there). I'd no occasion for a wife-A queen as yet was not my plan; I'd seen a lot of married life-My sire had been a married man. 'A son and heir be hanged !' I said-'How dare you ask for such a thing, 'You fight it out when I am dead 'And let the best man be the king!'

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'Your Majesty, we love you well !' A candid friend would say to me-'But there be tales that people tell 'Unfitted to thy dignity'---' My dignity be damned !' I'd say, 'Bring me no women's chattering ! 'I'll be a man while vet I may-'When trouble comes I'll be a king ! I'd kept my kingdom clean and strong While other kingdoms were like ours-I had no need to brook a wrong. I feared not all the rotten Powers I did not eat my heart out then, Nor feebly fight in verse or prose. I'd take five hundred thousand men To argue matters with my foes! It thrilled me through, the mighty tramp Of armed men, the thundering cheer-The pregnant whisper through the camp At dead of night : 'The King is here !' And though we paid for victory On some fields that were hard to hold, The faith my soldiers had in me Oft strengthened mine a hundredfold.

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I'd chat with soldiers by the fires On rocky heights and river banks. I'd seek the brains that war requires, And take my captains from the ranks. And so, until the storm was by, And came the peace just war can bring, I bore me so that men might cry With all their hearts, 'God Save the King.' When I was king the world was wide. And I was strong and I was free. I knew no hatred, knew no pride, No envy and no treachery. I feared no lies, I feared no truth, Nor any storm that time might bring. I had my love, I had my youth, The world was mine when I was king.

Peace came at last—and strange is Fate— The women begged just once alone
To see me robed in royal state And seated on my father's throne.
I thought, 'Shall I this boon deny ? And said—and 'twas a paltry thing :
'I'll show the fools just once that I
'Can look, as well as be, a king.'

They dusted out the castle old. And from the closet and the chest They dug the jewels set in gold-The crown and robes and all the rest. They came with eves like stars at night, With diamonds set in raven hair, They came with arms and bosoms white-And, Oh my God ! but one was fair ! They dressed me as the kings had been, The ancient royal purple spread, And one that was to be my queen, She placed the circlet on my head. They pressed their hearts and bowed to me, They knelt with arms uplifted all. I felt the rush of vanity-The pride that goes before the fall. And then the banquet and the wine With Satan's music and the glance Of siren eyes. Those captains mine Were reeling in the maddening dance : A finger writing on the wall, While girls sang as the angels sing-A drunken boaster in the hall.

The fool that used to be a king.

I rose again—no matter how— A woman, and a deeper fall—
I move amongst my people now The most degraded of them all.
But, if in centuries to come, I live once more and claim my own,

I'll see my subjects blind and dumb Before they set me on a throne.

### THE AUTHOR'S FAREWELL TO THE BUSHMEN

Some carry their swags in the Great North-West, Where the bravest battle and die, And a few have gone to their last long rest, And a few have said : Good-bye ! The coast grows dim, and it may be long Ere the Gums again I see; So I put my soul in a farewell song To the chaps who barracked for me. Their days are hard at the best of times, And their dreams are dreams of care-God bless them all for their big soft hearts, And the brave, brave grins they wear ! God keep me straight as a man can go, And true as a man may be ! For the sake of the hearts that were always so, Of the men who had faith in me! 10

#### FAREWELL TO THE BUSHMEN

And a ship-side word I would say, you chaps Of the blood of the Don't-give-in ! The world will call it a boast, perhaps— But I'll win, if a man can win ! And not for gold nor the world's applause— Though ways to the end they be— I'll win, if a man might win, because Of the men who believed in me.

# FROM THE BUSH

The Channel fog has lifted— And see where we have come ! Round all the world we've drifted, A hundred years from 'home.' The fields our parents longed for— Ah ! we shall ne'er know how— The wealth that they were wronged for We'll see as strangers now !

THE Dover cliffs have passed on— In morning light aglow— That our fathers looked their last on A weary time ago. Now grin, and grin your bravest ! We need be strong to fight ; For you go home to picture And I go home to write.

### FROM THE BUSH

Hold up your head in England, Tread firm on London streets ; We come from where the strong heart Of all Australia heats! Hold up your head in England However poor you roam ! For no men are your betters Who never sailed from home ! From a hundred years of hardshipe-Tis ours to tell the cost --From a thousand miles of silence Where London would be lost; From where the glorious sunset On sweeps of mulga glows-Ah! we know more than England, And more than Europe knows! Hold up your head in London, However poor you come, For no man is your better Who never sailed from home ! Our 'home' and foreign fathers, Where none but men dared go, Have done more for the White Man Than England e'er shall know !

# HEED NOT

HEED not the cock-sure tourist. Seeing with English eyes; Stroked at the banquet table Still, with the old stock lies-Pet of a social circle. Guest in a garden fair -Free of the first-class carriage-He learns no Australia there. Heed not the Southern humbugs By the first saloons who come-From his work in the wide, hot scrub-lands The Australian goes not home. Give them the toadies' knighthood, Fit for the souls they've got; Fear not to shame Australia For Australia knows them not. 14

### HRED NOT

Heed not the Sydney 'dailies,' Naught for the land they do; Heed not the Melbourne street crowd, For they know no more than you ! Pent in the coastal cities. Still on the old-world track-They know naught of Australia, Of the heart of the great Out-Back ! But wait for the voice that gathers Strength by the western creeks ! Heed ye the Out-Back shearers-List when the Great Bush speaks ! Heed ye the black-sheep, working His own salvation free-And Oh! heed ye the sons of the exiles When they speak of the things to be !

# THE BUSH GIRL

So you rode from the range where your brothers select,

Through the ghostly, grey Bush in the dawn --

You rode slowly at first, lest her heart should suspect That you were so glad to be gone ;

You had scarcely the courage to glance back at her By the homestead receding from view,

And you breathed with relief as you rounded the spur, For the world was a wide world to you.

Grey eyes that grow sadder than sunset or rain,

Fond heart that is ever more true,

Firm faith that grows firmer for watching in vain—

She'll wait by the slip-rails for you.

### THE BUSH GIRL

- Ah ! the world is a new and a wide one to you, But the world to your sweetheart is shut,
- For a change never comes to the lonely Bush homes Of the stockyard, the scrub, and the hut;
- And the only relief from its dulness she feels When the ridges grow softened and dim,
- And away in the dusk to the slip-rails she steals To dream of past hours ' with him.'
- Do you think, where, in place of bare fences, dry creeks,

Clear streams and green hedges are seen-

- Where the girls have the lily and rose in their cheeks, And the grass in mid-summer is green—
- Do you think, now and then, now or then, in the whirl

Of the town life, while London is new,

Of the hut in the Bush and the freckled-faced girl Who waits by the slip-rails for you?

Grey eyes that are sadder than sunset or rain,

Bruised heart that is ever more true,

Fond faith that is firmer for trusting in vain-

She waits by the slip-rails for you.

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# G. S.,' OR THE FOURTH COOK

- HE has notions of Australia from the tales that he's been told---
- Land of leggings and revolvers, land of savages and gold;
- So he begs old shirts, and someone patches up his worn-out duds.
- He is shipped as 'general servant,' scrubbing pots and peeling spuds
- (In the steamer's grimy alley, hating man and peeling spuds).
- There is little time to comfort, there is little time to cry-
- He will come back with a fortune—' We'll be happy by-and-by !'
- Scarcely time to kiss his sweetheart, barely time to change his duds,
  - 18

- Ere they want him at the galley, and they set him peeling spuds
- (With a butcher's knife, a bucket, and, say, half a ton of spuds).
- And he peels 'em hard to Plymouth, peels 'em fast to drown his grief,
- Peels 'em while his stomach sickens on the road to Teneriffe;
- Peels 'em while the donkey rattles, peels 'em while the engine thuds,
  - By the time they touch at Cape Town he's a don at peeling spuds
  - (And he finds some time for dreaming as he gets on with the spuds).
  - In the steamer's slushy alley, where the souls of men are dead,
  - And the adjectives are crimson if the substances are red,
  - He's perhaps a college black-sheep, and, maybe, of ancient blood-
  - Ah! his devil grips him sometimes as he reaches for a spud
  - (And he jerks his head and sadly gouges dry-rot from a spud).

- And his brave heart hopes and sickens as the weary days go round ;
- There is lots o' time for blue-lights ere they reach King George's Sound.
- But he gets his best suit ready-two white shirts and three bone studs !
- He will face the new world bravely when he's finished with the spuds
- And next week, perhaps, he'll gladly take a job at peeling spuds).
- There were heroes in Australia went exploring long ago;
- There are heroes in Australia that the world shall never know;
- And the men we use for heroes in the land of droughts and floods
- Often win their way to Sydney scrubbing pots and peeling spuds
- (Plucky beggars ! brave, poor devils ! gouging dry-rot from their spuds).

# JACK CORNSTALK

I MET with Jack Cornstalk in London to-day,

He saw me and coo-eed from over the way.

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Oh! the solemn-faced Londoners stared with surprise At his hair and his height as compared with his size; For his trousers were short and his collar was low,

And-there's not room to coo-ee in London, I know !

- But I said to him, 'Jack !' as he gripped my hand fast,
- 'Oh, I hear that our Country's a nation at last!
- 'I hear they have launched the new ship of the State,
- 'And with men at the wheel who are steering it straight.
- ' I hear 'twas the vote of your Bush mates and you ;
- 'And, oh, tell me, Jack Cornstalk, if this can be true?
- 'I hear that the bitter black strike times are o'er,
- 'And that Grabbitt and Co. shall crush Labour no more;

### JACK CORNSTALK

- 'That Australians are first where Australia was last,
- 'And the day of the foreign adventurer's past;
- 'That all things are coming we fought for so long;
- 'And, oh, tell me, Jack Cornstalk, if I have heard wrong ?'

For a moment he dropped the old grin that he wore— He'd a light in his eyes that was not there before—

- And he reached for my hand, which I gave, nothing loth,
- And replied in two words, and those words were 'My Oath!

'They are standing up grand, Toby Barton and See, And Australia's all right, you can take it from me.'

# THE MEN WHO MADE AUSTRALIA

# (WRITTEN ON THE OCCASION OF THE ROYAL VISIT TO AUSTRALIA, 1901)

THERE'LL be royal times in Sydney for the Cuff and . Collar Push,

There'll be lots of dreary drivel and clap-trap

From the men who own Australia, but who never knew the Bush,

And who could not point their runs out on the map.

- Oh, the daily Press will grovel as it never did before, There'll be many flags of welcome in the air,
- And the Civil Service poet, he shall write odes by the score--

But the men who made the land will not be there.

You shall meet the awful Lady of the latest Birthday Knight---

(She is trying to be English, don't-cher-know ?)

You shall hear the empty mouthing of the champion blatherskite,

You shall hear the boss of local drapers blow.

There'll be 'majahs' from the counter, tailors' dummies from the fleet,

And to represent Australia here to-day,

- There's the toady with his card-case and his cab in Downing-street;
  - But the men who made Australia—where are they?
- Call across the blazing sand wastes of the Never-Never Land !

There are some who will not answer yet awhile,

Some whose bones rot in the mulga or lie bleaching on the sand,

Died of thirst to win the land another mile.

Thrown from horses, ripped by cattle, lost on deserts ; and the weak,

Mad through loneliness or drink (no matter which),

- Drowned in floods or dead of fever by the sluggish slimy creek-
  - These are men who died to make the Wool-Kings rich.

- Call across the scrubby ridges where they clear the barren soil,
  - And the gaunt Bush-women share the work of men-
- Toil and loneliness for ever—hardship, loneliness and toil—
  - Where the brave drought-ruined farmer starts again !
- Call across the boundless sheep-runs of a country cursed for sheep-

Call across the awful scrublands west of Bourke!

But they have no time to listen—they have scarcely. time to sleep—

For the men who conquer deserts have to work.

- Dragged behind the crawling sheep-flock on the hot and dusty plain,
  - They must make a cheque to feed the wife and kids---
- Riding night-watch round the cattle in the pelting, freezing rain,

While world-weariness is pressing down the lids.

And away on far out-stations, seldom touched by Heaven's breath,

In a loneliness that smothers love and hate-

# 26 THE MEN WHO MADE AUSTRALIA

Where they never take white women-there they live the living death

With a half-caste or a black-gin for a mate.

- They must toil to save the gaunt stock in the blazing months of drought,
  - When the stinging, blinding blight is in men's eyes-
- On the wretched, burnt selections, on the big runs further out

Where the sand-storm rises lurid to the skies.

Not to profit when the grass is waving waist-high after rain,

And the mighty clip of wool comes rolling in-

For the Wool-King goes to Paris with his family again

And the gold that souls are sacrificed to win.

There are carriages in waiting for the swells from over-sea,

There are banquets in the latest London style,

While the men who made Australia live on damper, junk and tea-

But the quiet voices whisper, 'Wait a while !'

And, where charity and friendship are sincere,

Where a sinner is a brother and a stranger is a mate,

There the future of a nation's written clear.

Aye, the cities claim the triumphs of a land they do not know,

But all empty is the day they celebrate!

- For the men who made Australia federated long ago, And the men to rule Australia—they can wait.
- Though the bed may be the rough bunk or the gum leaves or the sand,

And the roof for half the year may be the sky-

There are men amongst the Bushmen who were born to save the land !

And they'll take their places sternly by-and-by.

There's a whisper on the desert though the sunset breeze hath died

In the scrubs, though not a breath to stir a bough,

There's a murmur, not of waters, down the Lachlan River side,

"Tis the spirit of Australia waking now!

For the sons of all Australia, they were born to conquer fate---

# 28 THE MEN WHO MADE AUSTRALIA

There's the weird hymn of the drought-night on the western water-shed,

Where the beds of unlocked rivers crack and parch;

Who are calling now on living men to march !

In the men's hut by the muddy billabong,

- On the Great North-Western Stock-routes where the drovers never rest,
  - They are sorting out the right things from the wrong.
- In the shearers' hut the slush lamp shows a haggard, stern-faced man

Preaching war against the Wool-King to his mates; And wherever go the billy, water-bag and frying-pan, They are drafting future histories of states !

<sup>&</sup>quot;Tis the dead that we have buried, and our great unburied dead,

Round the camp fire of the fencers by the furthest panel west,

## THE BULLETIN HOTEL

- I was drifting in the drizzle past the Cecil in the Strand—
- Which, I'm told, is very tony—and its front looks very grand;

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- And I somehow fell a-thinking of a pub I know so well,
- Of a palace in Australia called The Bulletin Hotel.

Just a little six-room'd shanty built of corrugated tin,

- And all round a blazing desert—land of camels, thirst and sin ;
- And the landlord is 'the Spider'—Western diggers know him well—
- Charlie Webb !---Ah, there you have it !---of the Bulletin Hotel.

- 'Tis a big soft-hearted spider in a land where life is grim,
- And a web of great good-nature that brings worn-out flies to him :
- Tis the club of many lost souls in the wide Westralian hell,
- And the stage of many Mitchells is the Bulletin Hotel.
- But the swagman, on his uppers, pulls an undertaker's mug,
- And he leans across the counter and he breathes in Charlie's lug-
- Tale of thirst and of misfortune. Charlie knows it, and—ah, well !
- But it's very bad for business at the Bulletin Hotel.
- 'What's a drink or two?' says Charlie, 'and you can't refuse a feed ;'
- But there's many a drink unpaid for, many sticks of 'borrowed' weed;
- And the poor old spineless bummer and the brokenhearted swell
- Know that they are sure of tucker at the Bulletin Hotel.

- There's the liquor and the license and the 'carriage' and the rent,
- And the sea or grave 'twixt Charlie and the fivers he has lent;
- And I'm forced to think in sorrow, for I know the country well,
- That the end will be the bailiff in the Bulletin Hotel.
- But he'll pack up in a hurry and he'll seek a cooler clime,

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- If I make a rise in England and I get out there in time.
- For a mate o' mine is Charlie and I stayed there for a spell,
- And I owe more than a jingle to the Bulletin Hotel.
- But there's lots of graft between us, there are many miles of sea,
- So, if you should drop on Charlie, just shake hands with him for me;
- Say I think the Bush less lonely than the great town where I dwell,
- And—a grander than the Cecil is the Bulletin Hotel.

'SACRED TO THE MEMORY OF "UNKNOWN" WHO WAS FOUND DEAD NEAR THIS TREE DURING THE GREAT DROUGHT OF '96. (Don't Cut Down this Tree, for a White Man Lies Beneath It)'

OH, the wild black swans fly westward still, While the sun goes down in glory— And away o'er lonely plain and hill Still runs the same old story : The sheoaks sigh it all day long— It is safe in the Big Scrub's keeping— 'Tis the butcher-birds' and the bell-birds' song In the gum where 'Unknown ' lies sleeping— (It is heard in the chat of the soldier-birds O'er the grave where 'Unknown ' lies sleeping).

#### "UNKNOWN"

Ah! the Bushmen knew not his name or land, Or the shame that had sent him here-But the Bushmen knew by the dead man's hand That his past life lay not near. The law of the land might have watched for him. Or a sweetheart, wife, or mother; But they bared their heads, and their eyes were dim, For he might have been a brother ! (Ah! the death he died brought him near to them. For he might have been a brother.) Oh, the wild black swans to the westward fade, And the sunset burns to ashes, And three times bright on an eastern range The light of a big star flashes, Like a signal sent to a distant strand Where a dead man's love sits weeping. And the night comes grand to the Great Lone Land O'er the grave where 'Unknown' lies sleeping, And the big white stars in their clusters blaze O'er the Bush where 'Unknown' lies sleeping.

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# THE SHEARERS

No church-bell rings them from the Track, No pulpit lights their blindness-"Tis hardship, drought and homelessness That teach those Bushmen kindness : The mateship born of barren lands, Of toil and thirst and danger-The camp-fare for the stranger set, The first place to the stranger. They do the best they can to-day-Take no thought of the morrow; Their way is not the old-world way-They live to lend and borrow. When shearing's done and cheques gone wrong, They call it ' time to slither '---They saddle up and say 'So-long !' And ride-the Lord knows whither. 34

#### THE SHEARERS

And though he may be brown or black. Or wrong man there or right man. The mate that's honest to his mates They call that man a 'white man'! They tramp in mateship side by side-The Protestant and 'Roman'-They call no biped lord or 'sir.' And touch their hats to no man ! They carry in their swags, perhaps, A portrait and a letter-And, maybe, deep down in their hearts, The hope of 'something better.' Where lonely miles are long to ride, And all days seem recurrent, There's lots of time to think of men They might have been-but weren't. They turn their faces to the west And leave the world behind them -(Their drought-dried graves are seldom green Where even mates can find them). They know too little of the world To rise to wealth or greatness : But in this book of mine I pay My tribute to their straightness.

# 'KNOCKING AROUND'

WEARY old wife, with the bucket and cow, 'How's your son Jack ? and where is he now ?' Haggard old eyes that turn to the west— 'Boys will be boys, and he's gone with the rest !' Grief without tears and grief without sound ; 'Somewhere up-country he's knocking around.'

Knocking around with a vagabond crew, Does for himself what a mother would do; Maybe in trouble and maybe hard-up, Maybe in want of a bite or a sup; Dead of the fever, or lost in the drought, Lonely old mother ! he's knocking about.

Wiry old man at the tail of the plough, 'Heard of Jack lately ? and where is he now?'

# 'KNOCKING AROUND'

Pauses a moment his forehead to wipe, Drops the rope reins while he feels for his pipe, Scratches his grey head in sorrow or doubt : 'Somewheers or others he's knocking about.'

> Knocking about on the runs of the West, Holding his own with the worst and the best Breaking in horses and risking his neck, Droving or shearing and making a cheque; Straight as a sapling—six-foot and sound, Jack is all right when he's knocking around

### THE SHEARER'S DREAM

- 'Oh, I dreamt I shore in a shearin' shed, and it was a dream of joy,
- For every one of the rouseabouts was a girl dressed up as a boy---
- Dressed up like a page in a pantomime, and the prettiest ever seen-
- They had flaxen hair, they had coal-black hair—and every shade between.'

'There was short, plump girls, there was tall, slim girls, and the handsomest ever seen.... They was four-foot-five, they was six-foot high, and every size between.'

- 'The shed was cooled by electric fans that was over every shoot;
- The pens was of polished ma-ho-gany, and ev'rything else to suit ;

- 'The huts was fixed with spring-mattresses, and the tucker was simply grand,
- And every night by the biller-bong we darneed to a German band.'
- Our pay was the wool on the jumbucks' backs, so we shore till all was blue---
- The sheep was washed afore they was shore (and the rams was scented too);
- And we all of us cried when the shed cut out, in spite of the long, hot days,
- For every hour them girls waltzed in with whisky and beer on tr-a-a-ys !'
- <sup>c</sup> There was three of them girls to every chap, and as jealous as they could be—
- There was three of them girls to every chap, and six of 'em picked on me;
- We was draftin' 'em out for the homeward track and sharin' 'em round like steam,
- When I woke with my head in the blazin' sun to find 'twas a shearer's dream.'

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- 'They had kind grey eyes, they had coal-black eyes, and the grandest ever seen---
- They had plump pink hands, they had slim white hands, and every shape be-tw-e-e..'

## THE NEVER-NEVER COUNTRY

By homestead, hut, and shearing-shed, By railroad, coach, and track—
By lonely graves of our brave dead, Up-Country and Out-Back :
To where 'neath glorious clustered stars The dreamy plains expand—
My home lies wide a thousand miles In the Never-Never Land.
It lies beyond the farming belt, Wide wastes of scrub and plain,
A blazing desert in the drought, A lake-land after rain ;
To the sky-line sweeps the waving grass, Or whirls the scorching sand—
A phantom land, a mystic land !

The Never-Never Land.

Where lone Mount Desolation lies, Mounts Dreadful and Despair-Tis lost beneath the rainless skies In hopeless deserts there ; It spreads nor'-west by No-Man's-Land-Where clouds are seldom seen --To where the cattle-stations lie Three hundred miles between. The drovers of the Great Stock Routes The strange Gulf country know-Where, travelling from the southern droughts, The big lean bullocks go; And camped by night where plains lie wide, Like some old ocean's bed. The watchmen in the starlight ride Round fifteen hundred head. And west of named and numbered days The shearers walk and ride-Jack Cornstalk and the Ne'er-do-well And the grey-beard side by side ; They veil their eyes from moon and stars, And slumber on the sand — Sad memories sleep as years go round In Never-Never Land.

### THE NEVER-NEVER COUNTRY

By lonely huts north-west of Bourke, Through years of flood and drought, The best of English black-sheep work Their own salvation out : Wild fresh-faced boys grown gaunt and brown-Stiff-lipped and haggard-eved-They live the Dead Past grimly down ! Where boundary-riders ride. The College Wreck who sank beneath, Then rose above his shame, Tramps West in mateship with the man Who cannot write his name. Tis there where on the barren track No last half-crust's begrudged -Where saint and sinner, side by side, Judge not, and are not judged. Oh rebels to society ! The Outcasts of the West-Oh hopeless eyes that smile for me, And broken hearts that jest ! The pluck to face a thousand miles -The grit to see it through ! The communism perfected !---And-I am proud of you !

## THE NEVER-NEVER COUNTRY

The Arab to true desert sand, The Finn to fields of snow. The Flax-stick turns to Maoriland, Where the seasons come and go; And this old fact comes home to me -And will not let me rest-However barren it may be, Your own land is the best ! And, lest at ease I should forget True mateship after all, My water-bag and billy yet Are hanging on the wall; And if my fate should show the sign, I'd tramp to sunsets grand With gaunt and stern-eyed mates of mine In the Never-Never Land.

IN Windsor Terrace, number four, I've taken my abode —
A little crescent from the street, A bight from City Road;
And, hard up and in exile, I To many fancies yield;
For it was here Micawber lived, And David Copperfield.

A bed, a table, and a chair,
A bottle and a cup.
The landlord's waiting even now
For something to turn up.
The landlady is spiritless —
They both seem tired of life ;
They cannot fight the battle like
Micawber and his wife.

But in the little open space That lies back from the street, The same old ancient, shabby clerk Is sitting on a seat. The same sad characters go by, The ragged children play-And things have very little changed Since Dickens passed away. Some seek religion in their grief, And some for friendship yearn ; Some fly to liquor for relief, But I to Dickens turn. I find him ever fresh and new, His lesson ever plain ; And every line that Dickens wrote I've read and read again. The tavern's just across the 'wye,' And frowsy women there Are gossiping and drinking gin, And twisting up their hair. And grubby girls go past at times, And furtive gentry lurk -I don't think anyone has died

Since Dickens did his work.

There's Jingle, Tigg, and Chevy Slyme, And Weevle-whom you will; And hard-up virtue proudly slinks Into the pawnshop still. Go east a bit from City Road. And all the rest are there— A friendly whistle might produce A Chicken anywhere. My favourite author's heroes I Should love, but somehow can't. I don't like David Copperfield As much as David's Aunt. And it may be because my mind Has been in many fogs -I don't like Nicholas Nickleby So well as Newman Noggs. I don't like Richard Carstone, Pip, Or Martin Chuzzlewit. And for the rich and fatherly I scarcely care a bit. The honest, sober clods are bores Who cannot suffer much. And with the Esther Summersons I never was in touch.

The 'Charleys' and the haggard wives. Kind hearts in poverty-And yes ! the Lizzie Hexams, too --Are very near to me; But men like Brothers Cheeryble, And Madeline Bray divine, And Nell. and Little Dorrit live In a better world than mine. The Nicklebys and Copperfields, They do not stand the test ; And in my heart I don't believe That Dickens loved them best. I can't admire their ways and talk, I do not like their looks-Those selfish, injured sticks that stalk Through all the Master's books. They're mostly selfish in their love, And selfish in their hate, They marry Dora Spenlows, too, While Agnes Wickfields wait; And back they come to poor Tom Pinch When hard up for a friend ; They come to wrecks like Newman Noggs To help them in the end.

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And-well, maybe I am unjust. And maybe I forget; Some of us marry dolls and jilt Our Agnes Wickfields vet. We seek our friends when fortune frowns-It has been ever thus-And we neglect Joe Gargery When fortune smiles on us. They get some rich old grandfather Or aunt to see them through, And you can trace self-interest In nearly all they do. And scoundrels like Ralph Nickleby, In spite of all their crimes, And crawlers like Uriah Heep Told bitter truths at times. But-yes, I love the vagabonds And failures from the ranks. And hard old files with hidden hearts Like Wemmick and like Pancks. And Jaggers had his ' poor dreams, too,' And fond hopes like the rest-But, somehow, somehow, all my life I've loved Dick Swiveller best !

But, let us peep at Snagsby first As softly he lays down Beside the bed of dying Joe Another half-a-crown. And Nemo's wretched pauper grave-But we can let them be, For Joe has said to Heaven : 'They Wos werry good to me.' And Wenmick with his aged P -----No doubt has his reward ; And Jaggers, hardest nut of all, Will be judged by the Lord. And Pancks, the rent-collecting screw, With laurels on his brow. Is loved by all the bleeding hearts In Bleeding Heart Yard now. Tom Pinch is very happy now, And Magwitch is at rest, And Newman Noggs again might hold His head up with the best; Micawber, too, when all is said, Drank bravely Sorrow's cup-Micawber worked to right them all, And something did turn up.

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How do 'John Edward Nandy, Sir!' And Plornish get along ? Why ! if the old man is in voice We'll hear him pipe a song. We'll have a look at Baptiste, too, While still the night is young-With Mrs. Plornish to explain In the Italian tongue. Before we go we'll ask about Poor young John Chivery : 'There never was a gentleman In all his family.' His hopeless love, his broken heart, But to his rival true; He came of Nature's gentlemen, But young John never knew. We'll pass the little midshipman With heart that swells and fills, Where Captain Ed'ard Cuttle waits For Wal'r and Sol Gills. Jack Bunsby stands by what he says (Which isn't very clear), And Toots with his own hopeless love-As true as any here.

And who that read has never felt The sorrow that it cost When Captain Cuttle read the news The 'Son and Heir' was lost ! And who that read has not rejoiced With him and 'Heart's Delight,' And felt as Captain Cuttle felt When Wal'r came that night !

And yonder, with a broken heart, That people thought was stone, Deserted in his ruined home, Poor Dombey sits alone. Who has not gulped a something down, Whose eye has not grown dim While feeling glad for Dombey's sake When Florence came to him ?

(A stately house in Lincolnshire— The scene is bleak and cold— The footsteps on the terrace sound To-night at Chesney Wold.

One who loved honour, wife, and truth, If nothing else besides, Along the dreary Avenue Sir Leicester Dedlock rides.)

We'll go round by Poll Sweedlepipe's, The bird and barber shop;
If Sairey Gamp is so dispoged We'll send her up a drop.
We'll cross High Holborn to the Bull, And, if he cares to come,
By streets that are not closed to him We'll see Dick Swiveller home.

He's looking rather glum to-night, The why I will not ask—
No matter how we act the goat, We mostly wear a mask.
Some wear a mask to hide the false (And some the good and true)—
I wouldn't be surprised to know Mark Tapley wore one too.

We wear a mask called cheerfulness While feeling sad inside; And men like Dombey, who was shy, Oft wear a mask called pride. A front of pure benevolence The grinding 'Patriarch ' bore; And kind men often wear a mask Like that which Jaggers wore.

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But, never mind, Dick Swiveller !
We'll see it out together
Beneath the wing of friendship, Dick, That never moults a feather.
We'll look upon the rosy yet
Full many a night, old friend,
And tread the mazy ere we woo
The balmy in the end.

Our palace walls are rather bare, The floor is somewhat damp, But, while there's liquor, anywhere Is good enough to camp.

What ho! mine host! bring forth thine ale And let the board be spread !---It is the hour when churchyards yawn And wine goes to the head. 'Twas you who saved poor Kit, old chap, When he was in a mess-But, what ho! Varlet! bring us wine! Here's to the Marchioness! 'We'll make a scholar of her yet,' She'll be a lady fair, 'And she shall go in silk attire And siller have to spare.' From sport to sport they hurry her To banish her regrets, And when we win a smile from her We cannot pay our debts ! Left orphans at a tender age, We're happiest in the land-We're Glorious Apollos, Dick, And you're Perpetual Grand ! You're king of all philosophers, And let the Godly rust; Here's to the obscure citizen Who sent the beer on trust !

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It sure would be a cheerful world If never man got tight; You spent your money on your friends, Dick Swiveller! Good night!

A dissolute and careless man— An idle, drunken path;
But see where Sidney Carton spills His last drink on the hearth !
A ruined life ! He lived for drink And but one thing beside—
And Oh ! it was a glorious death That Sidney Carton died.

And 'Which I meantersay is Pip '— The voices hurry past—
'Not to deceive you, sir '— 'Stand by!' 'Awast, my lass, awast!'
'Beware of widders, Samivel,' And shun strong drink, my friend ;
And, 'not to put too fine a point Upon it,' I must end.

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# THE THINGS WE DARE NOT TELL

- THE fields are fair in autumn yet, and the sun's still shining there,
- But we bow our heads and we brood and fret, because of the masks we wear ;
- Or we nod and smile the social while, and we say we're doing well,
- But we break our hearts, oh, we break our hearts ! for the things we must not tell.
- There's the old love wronged ere the new was won, there's the light of long ago ;
- There's the cruel lie that we suffer for, and the public must not know.
- So we go through life with a ghastly mask, and we're doing fairly well,
- While they break our hearts, oh, they kill our hearts! do the things we must not tell. 56

We see but pride in a selfish breast, while a heart is breaking there;

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- Oh, the world would be such a kindly world if all men's hearts lay bare !
- We live and share the living lie, we are doing very well,
- While they eat our hearts as the years go by, do the things we dare not tell.
- We bow us down to a dusty shrine, or a temple in the East,
- Or we stand and drink to the world-old creed, with the coffins at the feast;
- We fight it down, and we live it down, or we bear it bravely well,

But the best men die of a broken heart for the things they cannot tell.

# THE DRUMS OF BATTERSEA

- THEY can't hear in West o' London, where the worst dine with the best—
- Deaf to all save lies and laughter, they can't hear in London West—
- Tailored brutes and splendid harlots, and the parasites that be---
- They can't hear the warning thunder of the Drums of Battersea.

More drums! War drums!

Drums of Misery-

- Beating from the hearts of men the Drums of Battersea.
- Where the hearses hurry ever, and where man lives like a beast,

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They can feel the war-drums beating-men of Hell! and London East.

- And the far-off foreign farmers, fighting fiercely to be free,
- Found new courage in the echo of the Drums of Battersea.

More drums! War drums!

Beating for the free-

- Beating on the hearts of men the Drums of Battersea.
- And the drummers ! Ah ! the drummers !---stern and haggard men are those
- Standing grimly at their meetings; and their washed and mended clothes
- Speak of worn-out wives behind them and of grinding poverty—
- But the English of the English beat the Drums of Battersea !

More drums! War drums!

Drums of agony-

- The big bruised heart of England's in the Drums of Battersea.
- Where in fields slave Englishwomen, Oh! the sound of drums is there :
- I have heard it in the laughter of the nights of Leicester Square—

- Sailing southward with the summer, London but a dream to me,
- Still I feel the distant thunder of the Drums of Battersea!

More drums! War drums!

Drums of Liberty-

- Rolling round the English world the Drums of Battersea.
- Oh! I heard them in the Queen's Hall-aye! and London heard that night-
- While we formed up round the leaders while they struck one blow for right !
- And the old strength, that old fire, that I thought was dead in me,
- Blazed up fiercely at the beating of the Drums of Battersea !

More drums! War drums!

They beat for victory-

- When above the roar of Jingoes rolled the Drums of Battersea.
- And where'er my feet may wander, and howe'er I lay my head,
- I shall hear them while I'm dreaming—I shall hear them when I'm dead !

There is hope and there is terror in the Drums of Battersea !

More drums ! War drums !

Drums of destiny-

There's hope !---there's hope for England in the Drums of Battersea.

For they beat for men and women, beat for Christ, and you and me:

# AS FAR AS YOUR RIFLES COVER

- Do you think, you slaves of a thousand years to poverty, wealth and pride,
- You can crush the spirit that has been free in a land that's new and wide ?
- When you've scattered the last of the farmer bands, and the war for a while is over,
- You will hold the land—ay, you'll hold the land—the land that your rifles cover.
- Till your gold has levelled each mountain range where a wounded man can hide,
- Till your gold has lighted the moonless night on the plains where the rebels ride ;
- Till the future is proved, and the past is bribed from the son of the land's dead lover—

You may hold the land—you may hold the land just as far as your rifles cover.

# GIPSY TOO

IF they missed my face in Farmers' Arms When the landlord lit the lamp, They would grin and say in their country way, 'Oh! he's down at the Gipsy camp!' But they'd read of things in the Daily Mail That the wild Australians do. And I cared no day what the world might say, For I came of the Gipsies too. 'Oh ! the Gipsy crowd are a mongrel lot, 'And a thieving lot and sly !' But I'd dined on fowls in the far-off south, And a mongrel lot was I. 'Oh ! the Gipsy crowd are a roving gang, 'And a sulky, silent crew!' But they managed a smile and a word for me, For I came of the Gipsies too.

## GIPSY TOO

And the old queen looked in my palm one day— And a shrewd old dame was she:

'My pretty young gent, you may say your say,

'You may laugh your laugh at me;

'But I'll tell you the tale of your dead, dead past !' And she told me all too true ;

And she said that I'd die in a camp at last, For I came of the Gipsies too.

And the young queen looked in my eyes that night, In a nook where the hedge grew tall,

And the sky was swept and the stars were bright,

But her eyes had the sheen of all.

The spring was there, and the fields were fair,

And the world to my heart seemed new.

Twas 'A Romany lass to a Romany lad !'

But I came of the Gipsies too.

Now a Summer and Winter have gone between And wide, wild oceans flow ;

And they camp again by the sad old Thames,

Where the blackberry hedges grow.

Twas a roving star on a land afar

That proved to a maid untrue,

But we'll meet when they gather the Gipsy souls,

For I came of the Gipsies too.

# THE WANDER-LIGHT

AND they heard the tent-poles clatter, And the fly in twain was torn— Tis the soiled rag of a tatter Of the tent where I was born. And what matters it, I wonder ? Brick or stone or calico— Or a bush you were born under, When it happened long ago?

And my beds were camp beds and tramp beds and damp beds,

And my beds were dry beds on drought-stricken ground,

Hard beds and soft beds, and wide beds and narrow— For my beds were strange beds the wide world round.

> And the old hag seemed to ponder ("Twas my mother told me so),

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## THE WANDER-LIGHT

And she said that I would wander
Where but few would think to go.
'He will fly the haunts of tailors,
'He will cross the ocean wide,
'For his fathers, they were sailors
'All on his good father's side.'

Behind me, before me, Oh! my roads are stormy— The thunder of skies and the sea's sullen sound, The coaster or liner, the English or foreign, The state-room or steerage the wide world round.

> And the old hag she seemed troubled As she bent above the bed, 'He will dream things and he'll see things 'To come true when he is dead. 'He will see things all too plainly, 'And his fellows will deride,

' For his mothers they were gipsies

'All on his good mother's side.'

And my dreams are strange dreams, are day dreams, are grey dreams,

And my dreams are wild dreams, and old dreams and new ;

They haunt me and daunt me with fears of the morrow---

My brothers they doubt me—but my dreams come true.

And so I was born of fathers
From where ice-bound harbours are—
Men whose strong limbs never rested
And whose blue eyes saw afar.
Till, for gold, one left the ocean,
Seeking over plain and hill;
And so I was born of mothers
Whose deep minds were never still.

I rest not, 'tis best not, the world is a wide one-And, caged for an hour, I pace to and fro; I see things and dree things and plan while I'm sleeping,

I wander for ever and dream as I go.

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I have stood by Table Mountain, On the Lion at Capetown, And I watched the sunset fading From the roads that I marked down;

# THE WANDER-LIGHT

And I looked out with my brothers From the heights behind Bombay, Gazing north and west and eastward, Over roads I'll tread some day.

For my ways are strange ways and new ways and old ways,

And deep ways and steep ways and high ways and low;

I'm at home and at ease on a track that I know not, And restless and lost on a road that I know.

# GENOA

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A LONG farewell to Genoa That rises to the skies, Where the barren coast of Italy Like our own coastline lies. A sad farewell to Genoa. And long my heart shall grieve, The only city in the world That I was loath to leave. No sign of rush or strife is there, No war of greed they wage. The deep cool streets of Genoa Are rock-like in their age. No garish signs of commerce there Are flaunting in the sun. A rag hung from a balcony Is by an artist done.

## GENOA

And she was fair in Genoa. And she was very kind, Those pale blind-seeming eyes that seem Most beautifully blind. Oh they are sad in Genoa, Those poor soiled singing birds. I had but three Italian words And she three English words. But love is cheap in Genoa, Aye, love and wine are cheap, And neither leaves an aching head. Nor cuts the heart too deep; Save when the knife goes straight, and then There's little time to grieve-The only city in the world That I was loath to leave. I've said farewell to tinted days And glorious starry nights, I've said farewell to Naples with Her long straight lines of lights; But it is not for Naples but For Genoa that I grieve, The only city in the world That I was loath to leave.

# THE TRACKS. THAT LIE BY INDIA

- Now this is not a dismal song, like some I've sung of late,
- When I've been brooding all day long about my muddled fate;
- For though I've had a rocky time I'll never quite forget,
- And though I never was so deep in trouble and in debt,
- And though I never was so poor nor in a fix so tight-
- The tracks that run by India are shining in my sight.

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- The roads that run by India, and all the ports of call—
  - I'm going back to London first to raise the wherewithal.

I'll call at Suez and Port Said as I am going past

- (I was too worried to take notes when I was that way last),
- At Naples and at Genoa, and, if I get the chance,
- Who knows but I might run across the pleasant land of France.
- The track that runs by India goes up the hot Red Sea---

The other side of Africa is far too dull for me.

- (I fear that I have missed a chance I'll never get again
- To see the land of chivalry and bide awhile in Spain.)
- I'll graft a year in London, and if fortune smiles on me
- I'll take the track to India by France and Italy.

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- Tis sweet to court some foreign girl with eyes of lustrous glow,
- Who does not know my language and whose language I don't know ;
- To loll on gently-rolling decks beneath the softening skies,
- While she sits knitting opposite, and make love with our eyes-

- The glance that says far more than words, the old half-mystic smile-
- The track that runs by India will wait for me awhile.
- The tracks that run by India to China and Japan,
- The tracks where all the rovers go—the tracks that call a Man !
- I'm wearied of the formal lands of parson and of priest,
- Of dollars and of fashions, and I'm drifting towards the East;

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I'm tired of cant and cackle, and of sordid jobbery— The mystery of the East hath cast its glamour over me.

# SAY GOOD-BYE WHEN YOUR CHUM IS MARRIÉD

Now this is a rhyme that might well be carried Gummed in your hat till the end of things : Say Good-bye when your chum is married; Say Good-bye while the church-bell rings; Say Good-bye---if you ask why must you, "Tis for the sake of old friendship true, For as sure as death will his wife distrust you And lead him on to suspect you, too. Say Good-bye, though he be a brother, Seek him not when you're married, too-Things that you never would tell each other The wives will carry as young wives do. Say Good-bye ere their tongues shall strangle The friendship pledged ere the lights grew dim, For, as sure as death, will those young wives wrangle, And drag you into it, you and him.

# THE SEPARATION

WE knew too little of the world, And you and I were good-Twas paltry things that wrecked our lives As well I knew they would. The people said our love was dead, But how were they to know? Ah! had we loved each other less We'd not have quarrelled so. We knew too little of the world, And you and I were kind, We listened to what others said And both of us were blind. The people said 'twas selfishness, But how were they to know? Ah! had we both more selfish been We'd not have parted so.

# THE SEPARATION

But still when all seems lost on earth Then heaven sets a sign— Kneel down beside your lonely bed, And I will kneel by mine, And let us pray for happy days— Like those of long ago. Ah ! had we knelt together then We'd not have parted so.

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- ALL is well—in a prison—to-night, and the warders are crying 'All's Well!'
- I must speak, for the sake of my heart—if it's but to the walls of my cell.

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- For what does it matter to me if to-morrow I go where I will ?
- I'm as free as I ever shall be—there is naught in my life to fulfil.
- I am free! I am haunted no more by the question that tortured my brain :
  - Are you sane of a people gone mad? or mad in a world that is sane?'
- I have had time to rest-and to pray-and my reason no longer is vext
- By the spirit that hangs you one day, and would hail you as martyr the next.

- Are the fields of my fancy less fair through a window that's narrowed and barred ?
- Are the morning stars dimmed by the glare of the gas-light that flares in the yard ?
- No! And what does it matter to me if to-morrow I sail from the land?
- I am free, as I never was free ! I exult in my loneliness grand !
- Be a saint and a saviour of men-be a Christ, and they'll slander and rail !
- Only Crime's understood in the world, and a man is respected—in gaol.
- But I find in my raving a balm—in the worst that has come to the worst—
- Let me think of it all—I grow calm—let me think it all out from the first.
- Beyond the horizon of Self do the walls of my prison retreat,
- And I stand in a gap of the hills with the scene of my life at my feet;

- The range to the west, and the Peak, and the marsh where the dark ridges end,
- And the spurs running down to the Creek, and the she-oaks that sigh in the bend.
- The hints of the river below; and, away on the azure and green,
- The old goldfield of Specimen Flat, and the township a blotch on the scene;
- The store, the hotels, and the bank—and the gaol and the people who come
- With the weatherboard box and the tank—the Australian idea of home :
- The scribe—spirit-broken; the 'wreck,' in his mighthave-been glory—or shame;
- The townsman 'respected' or worthy; the workman respectful and tame;
- The boss of the pub with his fine sense of honour, grown moral and stout,
- Like the spielers who came with the 'line,' on the cheques that were made farther out.

- The clever young churchman, despised by the swaggering, popular man;
- The doctor with hands clasped behind, and bowed head, as if under a ban;
- The one man with the brains-with the power to lead, unsuspected and dumb,
- Whom Fate sets apart for the Hour—the man for the hour that *might* come.
- The old local liar whose story was ancient when Egypt was young,
- And the gossip who hangs on the fence and poisons God's world with her tongue;
- The haggard bush mother who'd nag, though a husband or child be divine,
- And who takes a fierce joy in a rag of the clothes on the newcomer's line.
- And a lad with a cloud on his heart who was lost in a world vague and dim—
- No one dreamed as he drifted apart that 'twas genius the matter with him ;
- Who was doomed, in that ignorant hole, to its spiritless level to sink,
- Till the iron had entered his soul, and his brain found a refuge in drink.

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- Perhaps I was bitter because of the tongues of disgrace in the town—
- Of a boy-nature misunderstood and its nobler ambitions sneered down---
- Of the sense of injustice that stings till it ends in the creed of the push-
- I was born in that shadow that clings to the old gully homes in the bush.
- And I was ambitious. Perhaps as a boy I could see things too plain—
- How I wished I could write of the truths-of the visions-that haunted my brain !
- Of the bush-buried toiler denied e'en the last loving comforts of all-
- Of my father who slaved till he died in the scrub by his wedges and maul.
- Twenty years, and from daylight till dark—twenty years it was split, fence, and grub,
- And the end was a tumble-down hut and a bare, dusty patch in the scrub.
- Twas the first time he'd rested, they said, but the knit in his forehead was deep,
- And to me the scarred hands of the dead seemed to work as I'd seen them in sleep.

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- And the mother who toiled by his side, through hardship and trouble and drought,
- And who fought for the home when he died till her heart—not her spirit—wore out :
- I am shamed for Australia and haunted by the face of the haggard bush wife---
- She who fights her grim battle undaunted because she knows nothing of life.
- By the barren track travelled by few men-poor victims of commerce, unknown-
- E'en the troubles that woman tells woman she suffers, unpitied, alone;
- Heart-dumbed and mind-dulled and benighted, Eve's beauty in girlhood destroyed !
- Till the wrongs never felt shall be righted—and the peace never missed be enjoyed.
- There was no one to understand me. I was lonely and shy as a lad,
- Or I lived in a world that was wider than ours; so of course I was 'mad.'
- Who is not understood is a 'crank'—so I suffered the tortures of men
- Doomed to think in the bush, till I drank and went wrong—I grew popular then.

- There was Doctor Lebenski, my friend—and the friend, too, of all who were down—
- Clever, gloomy, and generous drunkard---the pride and disgrace of the town.
- He had been through the glory and shame of a wild life by city and sea,
- And the tales of the land whence he came had a strong fascination for me.
- And often in yarning or fancy, when she-oaks grew misty and dim,
- From the forest and straight for the camp of the Cossack I've ridden with him :
- Ridden out in the dusk with a score, ridden back ere the dawning with ten— -
- Have struck at three kingdoms and Fate for the fair land of Poland again !
- He'd a sorrow that drink couldn't drown—that his great heart was powerless to fight—
- And I gathered the threads 'twixt the long, pregnant puffs of his last pipe at night;
- For he'd say to me, sadly: 'Jack Drew'—then he'd pause, as to watch the smoke curl—
- 'If a good girl should love you, be true--though you die for it-true to the girl !

- A man may be false to his country—a man may be false to his friend :
- Be a vagabond, drunkard, a spieler-yet his soul may come right in the end ;
- But there is no prayer, no atonement, no drink that can banish the shade
- 'From your side, if you've one spark of manhood, of a dead girl that you have betrayed.'

'One chance for a fortune,' we're told, in the lives of the poorest of men---

- There's a chance for a heaven on earth that comes over and over again !
- Twas for Ruth, the bank manager's niece, that the wretched old goldfield grew fair,
- And she came like an angel of peace in an hour of revengeful despair.
- A girl as God made her, and wise in a faith that was never estranged—
- From childhood neglected and wronged, she had grown with her nature unchanged;

- And she came as an angel of Hope as I crouched on Eternity's brink,
- And the loaded revolver and rope were parts of the horrors of drink.
- I was not to be trusted, they said, within sight of a cheque or a horse,
- And the worst that was said of my name all the gossips were glad to endorse.
- But she loved me—she loved me ! And why ? Ask the she-oaks that sighed in the bends—
- We had suffered alike, she and I, from the blindness of kinsfolk and friends.
- A girlhood of hardship and care, for she gave the great heart of a child
- To a brother whose idol was Self, and a brother goodnatured but 'wild ;'---
- And a father who left her behind when he'd suffered too much from the moan
- Of a mother grown selfish and blind in her trouble —'twas always her own.

- She was brave, and she never complained, for the hardships of youth that had driven
- My soul to the brink of perdition, but strengthened the girl's faith in Heaven.
- In the home that her relatives gave she was tortured each hour of her life
- By her cruel dependence—the slave of her aunt, the bank-manager's wife.
- Does the world know how easy to lead and how hard to be driven are men?
- She was leading me back with her love, to the faith of my childhood again !
- To my boyhood's neglected ideal-to the hopes that were strangled at birth,
- To the good and the truth of the real-to the good that was left on the earth.
- And the sigh of the oaks seemed a hymn, and the waters had music for me
- As I sat on the grass at her feet, and rested my head on her knee;
- And we seemed in a dreamland apart from the world's discontent and despair,
- For the cynic went out of my heart at the touch of her hand on my hair.

- She would talk like a matron at times, and she prattled at times like a child :
- 'I will trust you—I know you are good---you have only been careless and wild---
- 'You are clever—you'll rise in the world—you must think of your future and me—
- 'You will give up the drink for my sake, and you don't know how happy we'll be !'
- 'I can work, I will help you,' she said, and she'd plan out our future and home,
- But I found no response in my heart save the hungry old craving to roam.
- Would I follow the paths of the dead? I was young yet. Would I settle down
- To the life that our parents had led by the dull, paltryspirited town ?
- For the ghost of the cynic was there, and he waited and triumphed at last---
- One night—I'd been drinking, because of a spectre that rose from the past—
- My trust had so oft been betrayed : that at last I had turned to distrust—
- My sense of injustice so keen that my anger was always unjust.

- Would I sacrifice all for a wife, who was free now to put on my hat
- And to go far away from the life-from the home life of Specimen Flat?
- Would I live as our fathers had lived to the finish? And what was it worth ?
- A woman's reproach in the end—of all things most unjust on the earth.
- The old rebel stirred in my blood, and he whispered, 'What matter ?' 'Why not ?'
- And she trembled and paled, for the kiss that I gave her was reckless and hot.
- And the angel that watched o'er her slept, and the oaks sighed aloud in the creek
- As we sat in a shadow that crept from a storm-cloud that rose on the Peak.
- There's a voice warns the purest and best of their danger in love or in strife,
- But that voice is a knell to her honour who loves with the love of her life !
- And 'Ruth-Ruth !' I whispered at last in a voice that was not like my own-
- She trembled and clung to me fast with a sigh that was almost a moan.

- While you listen and doubt, and incline to the devil that plucks at your sleeve—
- When the whispers of angels have failed—then Heaven speaks once I believe.
- The lightning leapt out—in a flash only seen by those ridges and creeks,
- And the darkness shut down with a crash that I thought would have riven the peaks.
- By the path through the saplings we ran, as the great drops came pattering down,
- To the first of the low-lying ridges that lay between us and the town;
- Where she suddenly drew me aside with that beautiful instinct of love
- As the clatter of hoofs reached our ears—and a horseman loomed darkly above.
- Twas the Doctor : he reined up and sat for the first moment pallid and mute,
- Then he lifted his hand to his hat with his oldfashioned martial salute,
- And he said with a glance at the ridge, looming black with its pine-tops awhirl,
- 'Take my coat, you are caught in the storm !' and he whispered, 'Be true to the girl !'

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- He rode on-to a sick bed, maybe some twenty miles back in the bush,
- And we hurried on through the gloom, and I still seemed to hear in the 'woosh'
- Of the wind in the saplings and oaks, in the gums with their top boughs awhirl---
- In the voice of the gathering tempest—the warning, 'Be true to the girl !'
- And I wrapped the coat round her, and held her so close that I felt her heart thump
- When the lightning leapt out, as we crouched in the lee of the shell of a stump---
- And there seemed a strange fear in her eyes and the colour had gone from her cheek—
- And she scarcely had uttered a word since the hot brutal kiss by the creek.
- The storm rushed away to the west—to the ridges drought-stricken and dry—
- To the eastward loomed far-away peaks 'neath the still starry arch of the sky ;
- By the light of the full moon that swung from a curtain of cloud like a lamp,
- I saw that my tent had gone down in the storm, as we passed by the camp.

- Tis a small thing, or chance, such as this, that decides between hero and cur
- In one's heart. I was wet to the skin, and my comfort was precious to her.
- And her aunt was away in the city-the dining-room fire was alight,
- And the uncle was absent-he drank with some friends at the Royal that night.
- He came late, and passed to his room without glancing at her or at me-
- Too straight and precise, be it said, for a man who was sober to be.
- Then the drop of one boot on the floor (there was no wife to witness his guilt),
- And a moment thereafter a snore that proclaimed that he slept on the quilt.
- Was it vanity, love, or revolt? Was it joy that came into my life?
- As I sat there with her in my arms, and caressed her and called her 'My wife !'
- Ah, the coward ! But my heart shall bleed, though I live on for fifty long years,
- For she could not cry out, only plead with eyes that were brimming with tears.

- Not the passion so much brings remorse, but the thought of the treacherous part
- I'd have played in a future already planned out—ay ! endorsed in my heart !
- When a good woman falls for the sake of a love that has blinded her eyes,
- There is pardon, perhaps, for his lust; but what heaven could pardon the lies?
- And 'What does it matter?' I said. 'You are mine, I am yours—and for life.
- 'He is drunk and asleep-he won't hear, and tomorrow you shall be my wife !'
- There's an hour in the memory of most that we hate ever after and loathe---
- Twas the daylight that came like a ghost to her window that startled us both.

Twixt the door of her room and the door of the office I stood for a space,

When a treacherous board in the floor sent a crack like a shot through the place !---

- Then the creak of a step and the click of a lock in the manager's room---
- I grew cold to the stomach and sick, as I trembled and shrank in the gloom.
- He faced me, revolver in hand—'Now I know you, you treacherous whelp !
- 'Stand still, where you are, or I'll fire!' and he suddenly shouted for help.
- 'Help! Burglary!' Yell after yell-such a voice would have wakened the tomb;

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- And I heard her scream once, and she fell like a log on the floor of her room !
- And I thought of her then like a flash-of the foul fiend of gossip that drags
- A soul to perdition—I thought of the treacherous tongues of the hags;
- She would sacrifice all for my sake—she would tell the whole township the truth.
- I'd escape, send the Doctor a message and die-ere they took me-for Ruth !

- Then I rushed him—a struggle—a flash—I was down with a shot in my arm—
- Up again, and a desperate fight—hurried footsteps and cries of alarm—
- A mad struggle, a blow on the head—and the gossips will fill in the blank
- With the tale of the capture of Drew on the night he broke into the bank.
- In the cell at the lock-up all day and all night, without pause through my brain
- Whirled the scenes of my life to the last one-and over and over again
- I paced the small cell, till exhaustion brought sleep and I woke to the past
- Like a man metamorphosed—clear-headed, and strong in a purpose at last.
- She would sacrifice all for my sake—she would tell the whole township the truth—
- In the mood I was in I'd have given my life for a moment with Ruth;
- But still, as I thought, from without came the voice of the constable's wife ;
- 'They say it's brain fever, poor girl, and the doctor despairs of her life.'

- 'He has frightened the poor girl to death-such a pity-so pretty and young,'
- So the voice of a gossip chimed in : 'And the wretch! he deserves to be hung.
- 'They were always a bad lot, the Drews, and I knowed he was more rogue than crank,
- 'And he only pretended to court her so's to know his way into the bank!'
- Came the doctor at last with his voice hard and cold and a face like a stone—
- Hands behind, but it mattered not then —'twas a fight I must fight out alone:

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- 'You have cause to be thankful,' he said, as though speaking a line from the past---
- 'She was conscious an hour; she is dead, and she called for you, Drew, till the last !
- 'Ay! And I knew the truth, but I lied. She fought for the truth, but I lied;
- 'And I said you were well and were coming, and, listening and waiting, she died.
- 'God forgive you ! I warned you in time. You will suffer while reason endures :
- 'For the rest, you will know only I have the key of her story—and yours.'

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- The curious crowd in the court seemed to me but as ghosts from the past,
- As the words of the charge were read out, like a hymn from the first to the last;
- I repeated the words I'd rehearsed—in a voice that seemed strangely away—
- In their place, 'I am guilty,' I said ; and again, 'I have nothing to say.'
- I realised then, and stood straight—would I shrink from the eyes of the clown—
- From the eyes of the sawney who'd boast of success with a girl of the town?
- But there is human feeling in men which is easy, or hard, to define :
- Every eye, as I glanced round the court, was cast down, or averted from mine.
- Save the doctor's—it seemed to me then as if he and I stood there alone—
- For a moment he looked in my eyes with a wonderful smile in his own,
- Slowly lifted his hand in salute, turned and walked from the court-room, and then
- From the rear of the crowd came the whisper : 'The Doctor's been boozing again!'

- I could laugh at it then from the depth of the bitterness still in my heart,
- At the ignorant stare of surprise, at the constables' 'Arder in Car-rt!'
- But I know. Oh, I understand now how the poor tortured heart cries aloud
- For a flame from High Heaven to wither the grin on the face of a crowd.
- Then the Judge spoke harshly; I stood with my fluttering senses awhirl:
- My crime, he said sternly, had cost the young life of an innocent girl;
- I'd brought sorrow and death to a home, I was worse than a murderer now;
- And the sentence he passed on me there was the worst that the law would allow. . . .

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Let me rest—I grow weary and faint. Let me breathe—but what value is breath?

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Ah! the pain in my heart—as of old; and I know what it is—it is death.

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## THE CLIFFS

THEY sing of the grandeur of cliffs inland, But the cliffs of the ocean are truly grand; And I long to wander and dream and doubt Where the cliffs by the ocean run out and out.

To the northward far as the eye can reach Are sandhill, boulder, and sandy beach; But southward rises the track for me, Where the cliffs by the ocean run out to sea.

Friends may be gone in the morning fair, But the cliffs by the ocean are always there; Lovers may leave when the wind is chill, But the cliffs by the ocean are steadfast still.

They watch the sea and they ward the land, And they warn the ships from the treacherous sand; And I sadly think in the twilight hour What I might have been had I known my power.

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#### THE CLIFFS

Where the smoke-cloud blurs and the white sails fill, They point the ships to keep seaward still; And I think—Ah, me !—and I think—Ah, me ! Of the wreck I'd saved had I kept to sea.

Oh! the cliffs are old and the cliffs are sad, And they know me sane, while men deem me mad. Oh! the cliffs are firm and the cliffs are strong, And they know me right, while men deem me wrong

And I sometimes think in the dawning gray, I am old as they, I am old as they; And I think, I think that in field and town My spirit shall live till the cliffs come down.

- I've followed all my tracks and ways, from old bark school to Leicester Square,
- I've been right back to boyhood's days, and found no light or pleasure there.
- But every dream and every track—and there were many that I knew—
- They all lead on, or they lead back, to Bourke in Ninety-one, and two.
- No sign that green grass ever grew in scrubs that blazed beneath the sun;
- The plains were dust in Ninety-two, that baked to bricks in Ninety-one.
- On glaring iron-roofs of Bourke, the scorching, blinding sandstorms blew,

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And there was nothing beautiful in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.

- Save grit and generosity of hearts that broke and healed again---
- The hottest drought that ever blazed could never parch the hearts of men;
- And they were men in spite of all, and they were straight, and they were true,
- The hat went round at trouble's call, in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.
- They drank, when all is said and done, they gambled, and their speech was rough—
- You'd only need to say of one—'He was my mate!' that was enough.
- To hint a bushman was not white, nor to his Union straight and true,
- Would mean a long and bloody fight in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.
- The yard behind the Shearers' Arms was reckoned best of battle grounds,
- And there in peace and quietness they fought their ten or fifteen rounds;
- And then they washed the blood away, and then shook hands, as strong men do---
- And washed away the bitterness—in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.

- The Army on the grand old creek was mighty in those days gone by,
- For they had sisters who could shriek, and brothers who could testify;
- And by the muddy waterholes, they tackled sin till all was blue—
- They took our bobs and damned our souls in Ninetyone and Ninety-two.
- By shanty bars and shearing sheds, they took their toll and did their work-

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- But now and then they lost their heads, and raved of hotter hells than Bourke :
- The only message from the dead that ever came distinctly through—
- Was-' Send my overcoat to hell '--- it came to Bourke in Ninety-two.
- I know they drank, and fought, and died-some fighting fiends on blazing tracks-
- I don't remember that they lied, or crawled behind each others' backs;
- I don't remember that they loafed, or left a mate to battle through—
- Ah! men knew how to stick to men in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.

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- They're scattered wide and scattered far—by fan-like tracks, north, east, and west—
- The cruel New Australian star drew off the bravest and the best.
- The Cape and Klondyke claim their bones, the streets of London damned a few,
- And jingo-cursed Australia mourns for Ninety-one and Ninety-two.
- For ever westward in the land, Australians hear—and will not heed—
- The murmur of the board-room, and the sure and stealthy steps of greed---
- Bourke was a fortress on the track ! and garrisons were grim and true
- To hold the spoilers from Out Back, in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.
- I hear it in the ridges lone, and in the dread droughtstricken wild—
- I hear at times a woman's moan—the whimper of a hungry child :
- And—let the cynics say the word : 'a godless gang, a drunken crew'—
- But these were things I never heard in Ninety-one and Ninety-two.

- They say that things have changed out there, and western towns have altered quite :
- They don't know how to drink and swear, they've half forgotten how to fight;
- They've almost lost the strength to trust, the faith in mateship to be true—
- The heart that grew in drought and dust in Ninetyone and Ninety-two.
- The sneaking little paragraph, the dirty trick, the whispered lie
- Are known to us—the little men—whose souls are rotten through and through—
- We called them scabs and crawlers then, in Ninetyone and Ninety-two.

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- And could I roll the summers back, or bring the dead time on again;
- Or from the grave or world-wide track, call back to Bourke the vanished men,
- With mind content I'd go to sleep, and leave those mates to judge me true,
- And leave my name to Bourke to keep-the Bourke of Ninety-one and two.

# THE STRINGY-BARK TREE

THERE's the whitebox and pine on the ridges afar, Where the iron-bark, blue-gum, and peppermint are; There is many another, but dearest to me, And the king of them all was the stringy-bark tree.

Then of stringy-bark slabs were the walls of the hut, And from stringy-bark saplings the rafters were cut; And the roof that long sheltered my brothers and me Was of broad sheets of bark from the stringy-bark tree.

And when sawn-timber homes were built out in the West,

Then for walls and for ceilings its wood was the best; And for shingles and palings to last while men be,

There was nothing on earth like the stringy-bark tree. 106

## THE STRINGY-BARK TREE

Far up the long gullies the timber-trucks went,

Over tracks that seemed hopeless, by bark hut and tent;

And the gaunt timber-finder, who rode at his ease, Led them on to a gully of stringy-bark trees.

Now still from the ridges, by ways that are dark, Come the shingles and palings they call stringy-bark; Though you ride through long gullies a twelve months you'll see

But the old whitened stumps of the stringy-bark tree.

# THE BUSH FIRE

- AH, better the thud of the deadly gun, and the crash of the bursting shell,
- Than the terrible silence where drought is fought out there in the western hell;
- And better the rattle of rifles near, or the thunder on deck at sea,
- Than the sound—most hellish of all to hear—of a fire where it should not be.
- On the runs to the west of the Dingo Scrubs there was drought, and ruin, and death,
- And the sandstorm came from the dread north-east with the blast of a furnace-breath ;
- Till at last one day, at the fierce sunrise, a boundaryrider woke,
- And saw, in the place of the distant haze, a curtain of light blue smoke. 108

- There is saddling-up by the cockey's hut, and out in the station yard,
- And away to the north, north-east, north-west, the bushmen are riding hard.
- The pickets are out and many a scout, and many a mulga wire,
- While Bill and Jim, with their faces grim, are riding to meet the fire.
- It roars for days in the hopeless scrubs, and across, where the ground seems bare,
- With a cackle and hiss, like the hissing of snakes, the fire is travelling there;
- Till at last, exhausted by sleeplessness, and the terrible toil and heat,
- The squatter is crying, 'My God! the wool!' and the farmer, 'My God! the wheat!'
- But there comes a drunkard (who reels as he rides), with the news from the roadside pub :---
- 'Pat Murphy—the cockey—cut off by the fire ! way back in the Dingo Scrub !'
- 'Let the wheat and the woolshed go to '----- Well, they do as each great heart bids ;
- They are riding a race for the Dingo Scrub-for Pat and his wife and kids.

## THE BUSH FIRE

- And who is leading the race with death? An illmatched three, you'll allow;
- Flash Jim the breaker and Boozing Bill (who is riding steadily now),
- And Constable Dunn, of the Mounted Police, is riding between the two
- (He wants Flash Jim, but the job can wait till they get the Murphys through).
- As they strike the track through the blazing scrub, the trooper is heard to shout:
- 'We'll take them on to the Two-mile Tank, if we cannot bring them out !'
- A half-mile more, and the rest rein back, retreating, half-choked, half-blind;
- And the three are gone from the sight of men, and the bush fire roars behind.
- The Bushman wiped the tears of smoke, and like Bushmen wept and swore;
- 'Poor Bill will be wanting his drink to-night as never he did before.'

- 'And Dunn was the best in the whole damned force!' says a client of Dunn's, with pride;
- I reckon he'll serve his summons on Jim-when they get to the other side.
- It is daylight again, and the fire is past, and the black scrub silent and grim,
- Except for the blaze of an old dead tree, or the crash of a falling limb;
- And the Bushmen are riding again on the run, with hearts and with eyes that fill,
- To look for the bodies of Constable Dunn, Flash Jim, and Boozing Bill.
- They are found in the mud of the Two-mile Tank, where a fiend might scarce survive,
- But the Bushmen gather from words they hear that the bodies are much alive.
- There is Swearing Pat, with his grey beard singed, and his language of lurid hue,
- And his tough old wife, and his half-baked kids, and the three who dragged them through.

## THE BUSH FIRE

- Old Pat is deploring his burnt-out home, and his wife the climate warm ;
- And Jim the loss of his favourite horse, and Dunn his uniform;
- And Boozing Bill, with a raging thirst, is cursing the Dingo Scrub-
- He'll only ask for the loan of a flask and a lift to the nearest pub.

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Flash Jim the Breaker is lying low-blue-paper is after him,

- And Dunn, the trooper, is riding his rounds with a blind eye out for Jim,
- And Boozing Bill is fighting D.T's. in the township of Sudden Jerk-
- When they're wanted again in the Dingo Scrubs, they'll be there to do the work.

## THE BILL OF THE AGES

- HE shall live to the end of this mad old world, he has lived since the world began,
- He never has done any good for himself, but was good to every man.
- He never has done any good for himself, and I'm sure that he never will,
- He drinks and he swears and he fights at times, and his name is mostly Bill.

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- He carried a freezing mate to his cave, and nursed him, for all I know,
- When Europe was mostly a sheet of ice, thousands of years ago.
- He has stuck to many a mate since then, he is with us everywhere still
- (He loves and gambles when he is young, and the girls stick up for Bill.) H
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- He has rowed to a wreck, when the lifeboat failed, with Jim in a crazy boat;
- He has given his lifebelt many a time, and sunk that another might float.
- He has 'stood 'em off' while others escaped, when the niggers rushed from the hill,
- And rescue parties who came too late have found what was left of Bill.
- He has thirsted on deserts that others might drink, he has given lest others should lack,
- He has staggered half-blinded through fire or drought with a sick man on his back.
- He is first to the rescue in tunnel or shaft, from Newcastle to Broken Hill,
- When the water breaks in or the fire breaks out, Oh ! a leader of men is Bill.
- No humane societies' medals he wears for the fearful deaths he braved;
- He seems ashamed of the good he did, and ashamed of the lives he saved.
- If you chance to know of a noble deed he has done, you had best keep still;
- If you chance to know of a kindly act, you mustn't let on to Bill.

- He is fierce at a wrong, he is firm in right, he is kind to the weak and mild;
- He will slave all day and sit up all night by the side of a neighbour's child.
- For a woman in trouble he'd lay down his life, nor think as another man will;
- He's a man all through, but no other man's wife has ever been worse for Bill.
- He is good for the noblest sacrifice, he can do what few other men can;
- He can break his heart that the girl he loves may marry a better man.
- There's many a mother and wife to-night whose heart and whose eyes will fill
- When she thinks of the days of the long ago when she well might have stuck to Bill.
- Maybe he's in trouble or hard up now, and travelling far for work,
- Or fighting a dead past down to-night in a lone camp west of Bourke.
- When he's happy and flush, take your sorrow to him and borrow as much as you will;
- But when he's in trouble or stony-broke, you never will hear from Bill.

- And when, because of its million sins, this earth is cracked like a shell,
- He will stand by a mate at the Judgment Seat!—and comfort him down in—Well,
- I haven't much sentiment left, but let the cynic sneer as he will;
- Perhaps God will fix up the world again for the sake of the likes of Bill.

# WARATAH AND WATTLE

THOUGH poor and in trouble I wander alone,

With a rebel cockade in my hat;

- Though friends may desert me, and kindred disown, My country will never do that !
- You may sing of the Shamrock, the Thistle, and Rose,

Or the three in a bunch if you will;

But I know of a country that gathered all those,

And I love the great land where the Waratah grows,

And the Wattle-bough blooms on the hill.

Australia ! Australia ! so fair to behold-

While the blue sky is arching above ;

The stranger should never have need to be told,

That the Wattle-bloom means that her heart is of gold,

And the Waratah red blood of love.

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Australia ! Australia ! most beautiful name, Most kindly and bountiful land ;

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I would die every death that might save her from shame,

If a black cloud should rise on the strand;

But whatever the quarrel, whoever her foes,

Let them come ! Let them come when they will !

- Though the struggle be grim, 'tis Australia that knows,
- That her children shall fight while the Waratah grows,

And the Wattle blooms out on the hill.

# MY LAND AND I

THEY have eaten their fill at your tables spread, Like friends since the land was won ; And they rise with a cry of 'Australia's dead !' With the wheeze of 'Australia's done !' Oh, the theme is stale, but they tell the tale (How the weak old tale will keep !) Like the crows that croak on a splintered rail, That have gorged on a rotten sheep. I would sing a song in your darkest hour-In your darkest hour and mine-For I see the dawn of your wealth and power, And I see your bright star shine. The little men yelp and the little men lie, And they spread the lies afar; But we heed them never, my Land and I, For we know how small they are.

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#### MY LAND AND I

They know you not in a paltry town-In the streets where great hopes die— Oh, heart that never a flood could drown, And never a drought could dry ! Stand forth from the rim where the red sun dips, Strong son of the land's own son-With the grin of grit on your drought-chapped lips And say, is your country done? Stand forth from the land where the sunset dies. By the desolate lonely shed, With the smile of faith in your blighted eyes, And say, is your country dead? They see no future, they know no past-The parasite cur and clown, Who talk of ruin and death to last When a man or a land is down. God sends for answer the rain, the rain, And away on the western lease, The limitless plain grows green again, And the fattening stock increase. We'll lock your rivers, my land, my land, Dig lakes on the furthest run— While down in the corners where houses stand, They drivel, 'Australia's done!'

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#### MY LAND AND I

The parasites dine at your tables spread (As my enemies did at mine), And they croak and gurgle, 'Australia's dead While they guzzle Australian wine. But we heed them never, my land, my land, For we know how small they are, And we see the signs of a future grand, As we gaze on a rising star. 121

#### THE MEN WHO LIVE IT DOWN

- I HAVE sinned, like others, blindly, without thought and without fear,
- And my best friends say it kindly, 'You should go away from here.'
- Shall I fly the paltry spirit of a narrow little town,
- While the battle-drums are beating for the men who live it down ?
- Down the street where all men know me I can walk with level eyes,
- They believe the lies about me, they can sneer, but I despise.
- From my black and bitter childhood, from my dull and joyless youth,
- It is I who—it is I who—I and Christ who know the truth ! 122

- I have sinned, but as a man might; like a man I'll rise again
- From long nights of mental torture, from long days of care and pain.
- Pass me by with eyes averted, with a shrug or with a frown,
- But their heads shall bow in ashes long ere my head shall go down !
- Ah ! the curs, who dare not trespass, quick to sneer and quick to blame;
- But the wider world is kinder—it takes long to damn a name.
- There's a heart that's worth a million and a head that's worth a crown,
- And the flash of bright eyes sometimes for the men who live it down.
- There's a hand-grip close and silent, firm in trust and sympathy,
- Sends the old thrill through my being, sends the old hopes up in me.
- There is one who'll stand beside me when the screen is round my bed,
- And the godly pass their stricture on the sinner who is dead.

When the crape is round my picture and my mad, wild spirit's free---

And you realise how little you have ever known of me,

- When the worst is said and printed by the coward and the clown,
- Then, I trust, a friend might answer—'There lies one who lived it down.'

#### WHEN YOUR PANTS BEGIN TO GO

- WHEN you wear a cloudy collar and a shirt that isn't white,
- And you cannot sleep for thinking how you'll reach to-morrow night,
- You may be a man of sorrows, and on speaking terms with Care,
- But as yet you're unacquainted with the Demon of Despair;
- For I rather think that nothing heaps the trouble on your mind
- Like the knowledge that your trousers badly need a patch behind.
- I have noticed, when misfortune strikes the hero of the play,
- That his clothes are worn and tattered in a most unlikely way;

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- And the gods applaud and cheer him while he whines and loafs around,
- And they never seem to notice that his pants are mostly sound;
- But, of course, he cannot help it, for our mirth would mock his care,
- If the ceiling of his trousers showed the patches of repair.
- You are none the less a hero if you elevate your chin
- When you feel the pavement wearing through the leather, sock, and skin;
- You are rather more heroic than are ordinary folk
- If you scorn to fish for pity under cover of a joke;
- You will face the doubtful glances of the people that you know;
- But-of course, you're bound to face them when your pants begin to go.
- If, when flush, you took your pleasures—failed to make a god of Pelf,
- Some will say that for your troubles you can only thank yourself---

- Some will swear you'll die a beggar, but you only laugh at that
- While your garments hang together and you wear a decent hat;

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- You may laugh at their predictions while your soles are wearing low,
- But—a man's an awful coward when his pants begin to go.
- Though the present and the future may be anything but bright,
- It is best to tell the fellows that you're getting on all right.
- And a man prefers to say it--'tis a manly lie to tell,
- For the folks may be persuaded that you're doing very well;
- But it's hard to be a hero, and it's hard to wear a grin,
- When your most important garment is in places very thin.
- Get some sympathy and comfort from the chum who knows you best,
- That your sorrows won't run over in the presence of the rest;

#### 128 WHEN YOUR PANTS BEGIN TO GO

- There's a chum that you can go to when you feel inclined to whine,
- He'll declare your coat is tidy, and he'll say : 'Just look at mine !'
- Though you may be patched all over he will say it doesn't show,
- And he'll swear it can't be noticed when your pants begin to go.
- Brother mine, and of misfortune! times are hard, but do not fret,
- Keep your courage up and struggle, and we'll laugh at these things yet.
- Though there is no corn in Egypt, surely Africa has some--
- Keep your smile in working order for the better days to come !
- We will often laugh together at the hard times that we know,
- And get measured by the tailor when our pants begin to go.

#### WHEN YOUR PANTS BEGIN TO GO 129

- Now the lady of refinement, in the lap of comfort rocked,
- Chancing on these rugged verses, will pretend that she is shocked.
- Leave her to her smelling-bottle; 'tis the wealthy who decide
- That the world should hide its patches 'neath the cruel cloak of pride;
- And I think there's something noble, and I'll swear there's nothing low,
- In the pride of Human Nature when its pants begin to go.

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#### **ROBBIE'S STATUE**

GROWN tired of mourning for my sins— And brooding over merits— The other night with bothered brow I went amongst the spirits ; And I met one that I knew well : 'Oh, Scotty's Ghost, is that you ? And did you see the fearsome crowd 'At Robbie Burns's statue ? 'They hurried up in hansom cabs, 'Tall-hatted and frock-coated ; 'They trained it in from all the towns, 'The weird and hairy-throated ; 'They spoke in some outlandish tongue, 'They cut some comic capers, 'And ilka man was wild to get

' His name in all the papers.

#### ROBBIE'S STATUE

'They showed no gleam of intellect, 'Those frauds who rushed before us : 'They knew one verse of "Auld Lang Syne-" 'The first one and the chorus : 'They clacked the clack o' Scotlan's Bard, 'They glibly talked of "Rabby;" 'But what if he had come to them 'Without a groat and shabby ? 'They drank and wept for Robbie's sake, 'They stood and brayed like asses '(The living bard's a drunken rake, 'The dead one loved the lasses); 'If Robbie Burns were here, they'd sit 'As still as any mouse is ; 'If Robbie Burns should come their way, 'They'd turn him out their houses. 'Oh, weep for bonny Scotland's bard ! 'And praise the Scottish nation, 'Who made him spy and let him die 'Heart-broken in privation : 'Exciseman, so that he might live 'Through northern winters' rigours-

'Just as in southern lands they give

'The hard-up rhymer figures.

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#### ROBBIES STATUE

'We need some songs of stinging fun 'To wake the States and light 'em ; 'I wish a man like Robert Burns 'Were here to-day to write 'em ! 'But still the mockery shall survive 'Till the Day o' Judgment crashes-'The men we scorn when we're alive ' With praise insult our ashes.' And Scotty's ghost said : 'Never mind 'The fleas that you inherit; 'The living bard can flick them off-'They cannot hurt his spirit. 'The crawlers round the bardie's name 'Shall crawl through all the ages; 'His work's the living thing, and they Are fly-dirt on the pages.'

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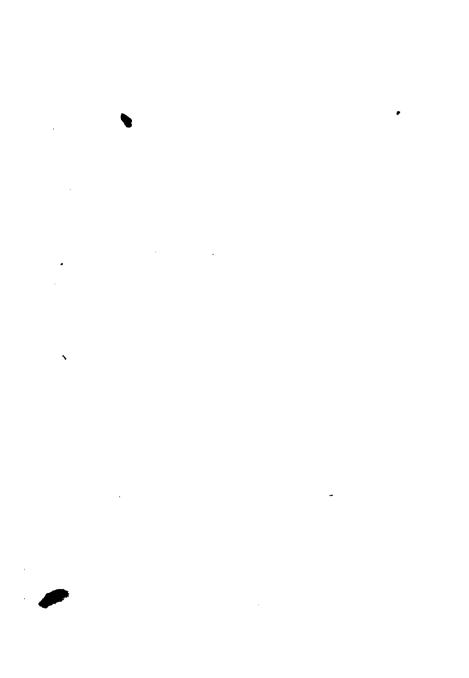
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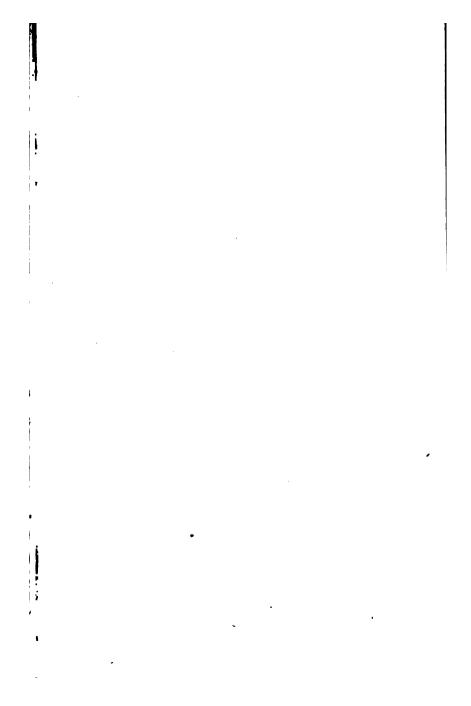
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